

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell and Alexander Graham Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, August 17, 1877, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. Queen's Hotel, Glasgow Friday Aug. 17th, 77 My dear Mrs. Bell:

Alec is so busy with the reports of the speeches in the British Association etc., which he must read, and the business letters that he must write, that I hope you will accept a letter from me in place of one from him.

We have been having a busy time of it since we landed, at least Alec has, and I wonder he does not think having a wife rather an incumbrance. Alec left me after we had breakfasted Wednesday, going he said to see the owners of the "Anchoria" about putting up telephones there. He returned after four or five hours with the postmaster with whom it appeared he had been the whole time. The postmaster come to see the telephones in which he was so much interested that he had a private trial of it on a line two miles long that night. Alec said that before the experiment the gentlemen of the office treated him politely, but after it they seemed almost to venerate him. One gentleman said after this he would believe anything he heard from America no matter how wonderful and incredible. Before this experiment we drove to the University and saw Sir William Thomson's assistant Mr. Gray who showed us all over. Alec invited him to witness the experiment and he was so much interests that he offered Alec the use of Sir William's artifical Atlantic Cable. The experiments commenced yesterday and since then. We have lived at the University, I at Prof. James Thomson's brother of Sir William, who kindly sheltered me while Alec is busy in the Lobaratory. The experiments have been successful so far as the instruments would go, but they are none of them intended for long distances, and Alec has not yet been able to make them very powerful. Last night at the postmaster's request Alec gave an exhibition

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of his telephones before some of the chief citizens of Glasgow. The instruments were worked over a circuit of a hundred miles the lines going to Edinburgh and back to Hillhead two miles away from this place.

We have been quite fascinated with Glasgow in spite of its smoke indeed we like it all the better for its makes the houses look so venerable and that is such a change from America. I am quite disgusted to find that the University buildings are only seven years old, they look at least two hundred years, so much have smoke and fog told upon them. Today we went to Mr. Thomson's at two o'clock and I am ashamed to say stayed until nine. We dined at six, and at dinner Alec got to talking about visible speech and so interested Mr. Thomson that he talked

I have sent Mabel to bed as she is very tired and it is late. I have no time to write today and must wait till Sunday.

Things are ripe here I think for the re-introduction of Visible Speech, as a phonetic reform. Shall write more fully Sunday. Telephony begins to create excitement. All the newspapers have the Telephone in capital letters on their posters this morning. Sent papers this morning. Will be in Plymouth — Monday. After the close of the meeting— Bath and Isaac Pitman— then London.

Your loving son Alec.